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8 January 2016

Dr Mechtild Rossler
Director, World Heritage Centre
UNESCO
7, Place de Fontenoy
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Paris 07 SP
France

Dear Mechtild,

Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast WHS – Proposed Boundary Modification

In accordance with the *Operational Guidelines*, please find enclosed a note and two maps which constitute a proposed minor boundary modification to the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast World Heritage Site.

Kind regards,

Hannah Jones
World Heritage Site and Underwater Policy Advisor

cc: Marie-Noel Tournoux, World Heritage Centre
Alessandro Balsamo, World Heritage Centre
Matthew Sudders, the Permanent Delegate of the United Kingdom to UNESCO
Mark Hammond, Department of the Environment, Northern Ireland
Henry Owen-John, Historic England
Keith Nichol, DCMS



Proposed Minor Boundary Modification to Giant's Causeway & Causeway Coast World Heritage Site property

In accordance with the Annex 11, Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention 2015, the following information is submitted:

1. Area of the property in hectares:

- As inscribed: 236.775 hectares
- As proposed to be modified: 239.405 hectares (an increase of 1.1%)

2. Description of the modification:

The dynamic nature of the Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast WHS (the WHS Property) is a rationale for its inscription. Active erosion of sea-cliff faces is part of the natural processes occurring in the WHS Property. The 2013 IUCN advisory mission recommended modification of the WHS Property boundary to ensure the sea-cliff faces remain within the inscribed boundary for some time to come.

Research has been undertaken at the WHS Property to gauge the rates of erosion and to identify those sections of sea-cliff most affected. The nature of the rocks of the WHS Property are of a hard type and State Party's experts have advised that an extension of 5 metres inland from the current WHS Property boundary should be sufficient to accommodate erosion of the sea-cliffs for the foreseeable future. It is therefore proposed to set back the WHS Property boundary by a distance of (on average) 5 metres inland.

3. Justification for the modification:

The modification was requested by the World Heritage Committee in response to the recommendation made following the 2013 IUCN advisory mission to address concerns that, should there be significant erosion, the cliff faces (key features of OUV) would no longer lie within the inscribed boundary of the WHS Property.

In addition site management and advances in mapping techniques provide a further rationale for proposing the minor boundary modification.

Since 1986, when the WHS Property was inscribed, there have been significant advances in mapping technology and the current boundary, when digitised using Geographic Information Systems and mapped on the Land and Property Services (LPS) Ordnance Survey of Northern Ireland® (OSNI®) base at a scale of 1:2,500, does not align with the fence-line that is currently in place to assist with management of the WHS Property. Technological advances now allow us to provide greater accuracy in positioning and to relate the boundary line to actual site management features.

At the time of Inscription (1986), the inland boundary line of the WHS Property was intended to reflect the line of a management post and wire fence that restricted public access to adjacent farmland. The line of the fence varied in distance from the

top of the sea-cliffs. Since the Inscription date the management fence line has been repaired and realigned in places.

The minor modification would match the WHS Property boundary with the current management fence-line where possible.

4. Contribution to the maintenance of the Outstanding Universal Value:

The WHS Property inscription recognizes the dynamic nature of the site (natural cliff erosion) as a key attribute. Erosion rates are relatively low (by comparison with other WHSs such as Jurassic Coast) but there may come a time when the active sea-cliff edge has moved back beyond the current WHS Property boundary. The proposed minor modification will postpone that eventuality and will have the effect of retaining the key features within the boundary of the inscribed WHS Property and maintaining its OUV for many years to come.

5. Implications for legal protection:

Ownership of the additional lands proposed to be included in the WHS Property will be unaffected by this minor boundary modification. The land will remain in the ownership of the existing three property owners. The land owners have been informed of the proposed modifications and have raised no objections.

No legal charge will be made on the land to be included in the WHS Property.

The additional lands inside the WHS Property will become subject to different planning policy as they will now be subject to specific planning policies associated with lands inside the Property (see Annex B).

6. Implications for management arrangements:

The minor modification will match the boundary of the WHS Property with the existing management fence-line where possible. This boundary change will clarify to WHS Property managers and adjacent landowners the boundary line of the inscribed WHS Property.

There is no management requirement to adjust either the existing management fence-line or the public path that runs between the cliff-top and the fence. Public access will continue to be permitted on the strip of land between the cliff edge and the existing management fence. However, the sea-cliff edge is actively eroding in areas and there may come a time when both the path and fence have to be moved further inland for practical and safety reasons.

There is no need to amend the current management of the proposed extension strip in order to protect the OUV of the WHS Property. The lands affected are currently already managed as part of the WHS Property or are in agricultural production (mainly rough grazing).

The management of this additional strip will be discussed in future management plans for the WHS Property and risks to OUV will be assessed. Landowners are already represented on the World Heritage Site Steering Group and will have the opportunity to contribute to any future management plans.

Delimitations: Original and Proposed to
Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast
World Heritage Site

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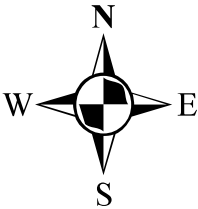
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Title: **Area of Inscripted site**
Scale: **1:11,000**
Date: **11 August 2015**

Description:
Original and Proposed Boundary of
World Heritage Site



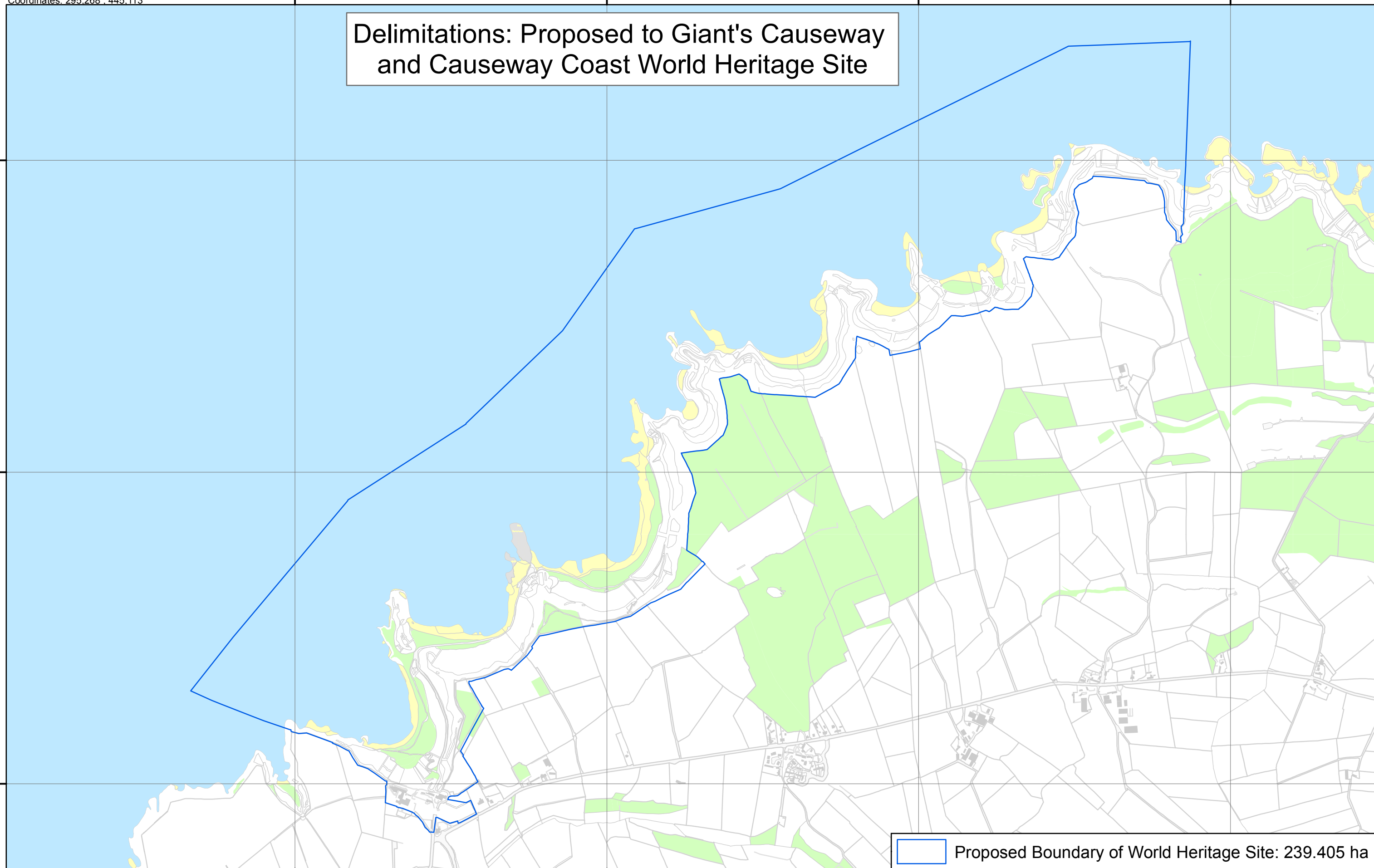
 Proposed Boundary of World Heritage Site: 239.405 ha
 Original Boundary of World Heritage Site: 236.775 ha



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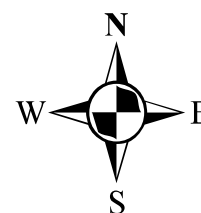
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Delimitations: Proposed to Giant's Causeway and Causeway Coast World Heritage Site



Title: Area of Inscribed site
Scale: 1:11,000
Date: 11 August 2015

Description:
Proposed Boundary of World Heritage Site



 Proposed Boundary of World Heritage Site: 239.405 ha